

NSC BRIEFING

29 October 1957

THE GUATEMALAN SITUATION

- I. Army and new president Flores Avendano (installed 26 October) have promised new elections in near future--November, December and January have been mentioned--in which government will remain completely neutral.
  - A. Many observers believe leftist Revolutionary Party (PR) will win.
  - B. PR emerged from last week's violence as probably country's strongest party.
    1. Middle-of-the-road party of late Castillo Armas now discredited and virtually destroyed.
    2. Rightist YDIGORAS Fuentes, runner-up in annulled 20 October election--in which he had leftist support and received strong protest vote--unlikely to win as many votes in new election.
    3. Other anti-Communist groups seem unable to unite.
    4. PR already organizing decisive rural vote, reportedly with help of Communists.
  - C. Communists stand to gain from this situation.
    1. Although they have only 300-500 party members, they have infiltrated PR, which is composed of former backers of leftist Arevalo and pro-Communist Arbenz regimes.

State Dept. review completed

80  
DOCUMENT NO. 80  
NO CHANGE IN CLASS. 17  
X DECLASSIFIED  
CLASS. CHANGED TO: 13 3 0  
NEXT REVIEW DATE: 17  
AUTH: HR 70-2

2. In addition to pro-Communist elements, PR also contains some genuine liberals who are trying to purge them.
- D. Army, since 1954 the bulwark against extremes of right and left, is now divided and confused. According to US Embassy, government cannot rely on it.